

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

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*Black Mack the Handpress:
An Appreciation*

ALASTAIR JOHNSTON



ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

BOOK REVIEWS

GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

PUBLICATION NOTE

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Printed by Wesley B. Tanner & Will H. Powers : Berkeley

Black Mack the Handpress: An Appreciation

ALASTAIR JOHNSTON

ON MY FIRST ENCOUNTER with the work of this elusive press I was struck with the cleanliness of its design, the humorousness of its ephemera, and the scholarship of its books. Wishing to learn more about this venture and its operators, I consulted the usual authorities, beginning with the checklist of private press books. I soon realized that here, for once, was a reticent printer, for nothing seemed to be known about Black Mack, the Handpress. The List of Private Press Names had "1940?" as its only citation. The Private Libraries Association of Pinner, England, listed two Black Mack publications in their 1962 compilation with the notation, "immaculately produced."

The Black Mack imprint had moved from San Francisco, to Wisconsin, to Palo Alto, and to Los Angeles, where, I thought, its style was also located, as the work of the press shared some similarities with Los Angeles fine printing, notably the Plantin Press and Ward Ritchie.

Muir Dawson furnished me with the information I needed to contact T. W. McDonald, who lives with his wife, Dr. Dorothy McDonald, near San Diego. I sent my most recent work, a pamphlet by Jan Tschichold, with a letter of admiration. McDonald's reply was terse, said he didn't rate my praises, and to please drop him from my mailing list. Undeterred, I visited him in San Diego when I was invited to participate in a



colloquium on the book. I learned more from Ward Ritchie, a fellow panelist, who had known McDonald from his earliest days in printing.

McDonald's career began when he attended Frank Wiggin's Trade School in Los Angeles. He and Edd S. Smith were looked on as "model students." In 1929 he moved north to San

THE INCOMPARABLE PHYSICIAN

H. L. Mencken

無上可生

1936

Francisco and apprenticed with John Henry Nash as a compositor.

I asked McDonald about hand composing Nash's books and whether he had ever employed Monotype or Linotype. Late in his career, Nash did print *Paradise Lost* for the Limited Editions Club in Linotype. But during his sojourn at the press, McDonald recalled, when George Macy had wanted a price for printing a book from Nash, and had said, "I thought in this case you could use the machine," Nash was greatly offended. Although he was a firm believer in hand composition, his printing was done on a cylinder press by the Trade

Pressroom. The Nash shop was run by Joseph FauntLeRoy and there was one other employee at the time, Mrs. Fritzie Buchignani. The incredible mitred rule which was a signature of Nash books was done by Nash himself.

We discussed the elaborate style of fine printing which Nash pioneered, and McDonald characterized him as an egotist, but above all as a terrific salesman. Nash would take him to football games, but didn't pay much attention to the young McDonald in the shop. After the crash of Wall Street the work slowly died out and McDonald was laid off though Nash himself continued to work into the 'thirties.

To quote McDonald from our conversation:

"Mr. Nash loved titles and he had a Doctor's degree from Mills College and some sort of honorary degree from Oregon. He was a professor and would go up there and spend a week with some of the kids at Eugene."

Yen

Li-Shen, being called in the middle of the night to the bedside of the rich tax-gatherer, Chu Yi-Foy, found his distinguished patient suffering from a spasm of the liver. An examination of the pulse, tongue, toe-nails, and hair-roots revealing the fact that the malady was caused by the presence of a multitude of small worms in the blood, the learned doctor forthwith dispatched his servant to his surgery for a vial of gnats' eyes dissolved in the saliva of men execrated by strangling, that being the remedy advised by Li Tan-Kien and other high authorities for the relief of this painful and dangerous condition.

When the servant returned the patient was so far gone that Cheyne-Stokes breathing had already set in, and so the doctor decided to administer the whole contents of the vial—an heroic dose, truly, for it has been

immemorably held that even so little as the amount that will cling to the end of a horsehair is sufficient to cure. Alas, in his professional zeal and excitement, the celebrated pathologist permitted his hand to shake like a myrtle leaf in a Spring gale, and so he dropped not only the contents of the vial, but also the vial itself down the œsophagus of his moribund patient.

The accident, however, did not impede the powerful effects of this famous remedy. In ten minutes Chu Yi-Foy was so far recovered that he asked for a plate of rice stewed with plums, and by morning he was able to leave his bed and receive the reports of his spies, informers, and tortioners. That day he sent for Doctor Yen and in token of his gratitude, for he was a just and righteous man, settled upon him in due form of law, and upon his heirs and assigns in per-

I then was out of a job and applied to Ed Grabhorn at that point. Gregg Anderson was already employed there. Both Gregg and I were living at Hazel Dreis' house on Franklin Street. Hazel Dreis was a bookbinder who bound the Grabhorn edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Gregg told the story that now and then Ed Grabhorn would fire everybody saying, "I'm going out of business," and that's what he did with us.¹ So Gregg and I were out of a job and we went up to Napa together where we picked prunes; at the end of the season we parted: Gregg went to Boston and tried to get a job with Updike, and he didn't, but he did connect with E. Harold Hugo at the Meriden Gravure Co. I came back to Los Angeles and stayed with my parents briefly and then went to sea.

McDonald left his ship in Honolulu and worked as a day laborer, then later went to Japan where he read proof on the *Japan Times*, followed by a stint at the *China Press* in Shanghai.

Returning to Southern California in the early thirties, McDonald made up the pages of the Occidental College Yearbook for Ward Ritchie. At this time he met Saul Marks through Edd S. Smith. After attending Art Center School for a couple of years he returned to San Francisco to work for the advertising agency Bowman, Daugherty, and Cummings. In order to return to printing, he faked some of his experience in the Orient and received a journeyman card from the Typographical Union. He went to work for Haywood Hunt at Kennedy-Ten Bosch, and then for Mackenzie and Harris, the typefounders. He worked on and off as a compositor and proofreader and at this time met his wife Dorothy who was attending U.C. Medical School. This was in 1935 and the work was far from steady, though for a five-day week he could earn forty-nine dollars with no deductions and considered this luxurious.

At the outbreak of World War II McDonald taught Japanese in the Oriental Languages department at Berkeley and while there completed a degree. After a stint as a librarian he returned as a graduate student to U.C. Berkeley's Library School.

1. See *Reminiscences of the Grabhorn Press*.

I asked McDonald about the genesis of his own imprint, Black Mack, the Handpress.

Well, I was working for the Gillick Press in Berkeley, and I met Mr. Nash on the street. He had long closed his office; I don't think his type had been sold then, I don't know. He had retired. I met him on the street and asked him about his handpress. This was an octavo size Albion that had been selected for him by Bruce Rogers.² And Nash said, yes, he still had it,

31 xii 64

*from the Printer & his Mistress
to friends of
BLACK MACK, the Handpress*

G R E E T I N G S
as they hail the new year

5

L A M E N T A T I O N S
*as they contemplate the advent
of the*

G R E A T S O C I E T Y

20 i 65



“... and some have greatness thrust upon them.”

2. See Wilder Bentley, "Notes on the Amateur Handpress," Book Club of California *Quarterly News-Letter*, Vol. 7, No. 2.

and I said, "Would you be willing to sell it?" He said he'd like to think about it and a day or two later I had a letter from Mrs. Nash saying he would sell the press to me for fifty dollars. I wanted it and I paid him and, as I remember, as I paid him he asked, "Now, Mac, is this too much?" And I said, "No, indeed, Mr. Nash, no indeed. I'm delighted to have it." So I bought it from him. The press itself was black . . .

Here his wife interrupted to explain the origin of the name: "You were looking at me and you had a two days' growth of whiskers . . . and I said, 'Call it Black Mack'."

I pressed McDonald more about his peripatetic career as he had been involved with a lot of the fine printers of his generation. They lived in Palo Alto while he worked at Stanford University Press as a proofreader. Then in the mid-sixties they moved to Mexico where McDonald researched early printing on this continent. He continued,

I went to Library School, and at the end of that year I worked a year at Oakland Public Library. Dorothy was in private practice and she was tired so she decided on an early retirement and we went to Mexico. And then in 1967 when we were practically broke we came back to California and eventually I got a job at Anderson, Ritchie, and Simon as proofreader. But during the time I was in Mexico I was fascinated with, not the pre-Columbian period, but the mid-Spain era.

Indeed, in Mexico the McDonalds thought they had located Juan Pablos' press, one which had turned up in a junk shop in Mexico City. It had been converted from a standing press to a printing press and bore Pedro Ocharte's fire marks. He was the third printer in Mexico; his wife printed also.³

Ward Ritchie told me that McDonald's proofreading of Huntington Library publications was so scholarly that he was able to edit them too. I thought McDonald must have worked at the Plantin Press as there is a facility in his handling of Bembo and Fairbank reminiscent of Saul Marks' style. We discussed his friendship with the Markses, and Saul's meticulous craftsmanship which placed him beyond every contemporary printer. But McDonald's only involvement at

3. See McDonald, "The Echaniz Press: America's First Printing Press?", Book Club of California *Quarterly News-Letter*, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 3.

Plantin Press, apart from a little recreational typesticking, was to hand-fold the sheets for the Book Club of California publication, *Four Essays of Cobden-Sanderson*, edited by John Dreyfus. In 1962 McDonald first visited England on a busman's holiday with Saul Marks. On a visit to Oxford University Press he felt that he was being a nuisance and that Harry Carter was only tolerating his visit until he showed some knowledge of Oriental types in the composing room and Carter warmed to him, inviting him back. Carter also explained the reason for the different type height at Oxford by saying that printers used to steal type to sell to other printers and, as Oxford was one of the few foundries in England for many years, they had created their own type height to thwart this.

Of the **BLACK MACK FOOTNOTES Series:**

Asterisk

Being the first draft of a footnote
for a projected
History of Juan Pablos
and his printing-
“House of Juan Cromberger”
(New Spain *ca.* 1539)

Printed at **BLACK MACK, the Handpress**
LOS ANGELES 1960

FOOTNOTE TO THE HISTORY OF PRINTING IN AMERICA

Obelisk

Containing Perhaps the First Typographic Printing in Any Language of the Complete Texts of the Juan Pablos and Gil Barbero Contracts with Juan Cromberger Signed at Seville June 1539 Providing for the Founding of What May Have Been the First Printing-Office in the Western Hemisphere

Englished, Printed for sale, and Copyrighted
by THOMAS W M'DONALD at BLACK MACK, the Handpress
1479 Angelus Avenue, Los Angeles 26

M D C C C C L X J

McDonald also knew and admired two of the key figures in twentieth-century typography, Beatrice Warde and Stanley Morison. On his typographical pilgrimage in 1962, he pre-

sented Morison with two Black Mack booklets, *Asterisk* and *Obelisk*, both set in Bembo. Morison turned to Mrs. Warde and asked, "Isn't it interesting to view one's works from afar?"

Mrs. Warde took the McDonalds to see *The Canterbury Tales*. Later that year she stayed with the McDonalds on a visit to the United States and would receive daily telegrams from Morison. Sometimes the cable would be addressed to McDonald but would begin, "Tell Mrs. Warde. . . ." When they had to leave to take her to the airport to fly to San Francisco, they found her composing a letter to Morison and had to hurry her out of the house. Barely making the airport on time, she had just embarked when all the lights on the plane went out. They'd blown a fuse on her arrival. As McDonald put it, "She was a high-powered woman!" When she visited them again some years later in Palo Alto, they took her to a meeting of the Moxon Chappel at the Quyles' in Murphys. Dr. McDonald recalls Mrs. Warde rising early to exercise, adding, "I could have joined her at twenty-five or thirty, but not at seventy."

McDonald added a note describing his visit to her home in Epsom where she had many engravings of Eric Gill displayed—many nudes, of course—and she told McDonald that Gill said the bulk of his family were impossible as models, for they all had piano legs, but that he *loved* her legs!

McDonald had asked her about her husband Frederic Warde, bibliographer of Bruce Rogers and designer of Centaur's companion italic, Arrighi, and a sort of veil had dropped between them and she replied, "I never really knew him."

Knowing the rumors of the intimacy between Mrs. Warde and Morison he had inquired, on another occasion, about Stanley Morison's wife. Mrs. Warde replied, "I don't know if he was ever married, I never asked him."

And so, with similar gossip about book people and the McDonalds' travels to Teneriffe and Mexico we concluded our brief chat. I was pleased to have had such an accord with this lively and learned couple who had modestly remained out

of the chronicles of Californian printing history but yet had been so intrinsic to it, adding their particular illumination to the world of the amateur handpress printer.

Checklist of Printing by T. W. McDonald

A Christmas Greeting from a printer's devil / Thomas W. McDonald / San Francisco / mcmxxix /

The term "printer's devil" as it is applied to the apprentice in a printing office, is said to have originated in Venice. A printer found a deserted little negro boy and took him into his office. The report spread that he was employing the black art with the aid of an imp of Satan and, fearing a serious result, for this was in 1490, the printer issued this proclamation: "Be it known to Venice that I, Aldus Manutius, printer to the Doge, have this day made public exposure of the printer's devil. All who think he is not flesh & blood may come & pinch him." Pity the poor devil!

Robert Ernest Cowan, THE SPANISH PRESS OF CALIFORNIA, 1833-1845, 21 pp., plain brown paper wrappers, signed by the author, 10.2 x 14 cms. Bulmer type.

Colophon: *A Note on this Edition.*

This essay originally appeared in *Publication No. III* of the California Historic-Genealogical Society (San Francisco, 1902). It was reprinted in *A Bibliography of the Spanish Press of California, 1833-1845* (San Francisco, 1919), to which it forms the preface. In 1928 it was issued separately as an insert in *The Pacific Printer and Publisher* by the San Francisco Bay Cities Club of Printing House Craftsmen. This edition was planned and set in Bulmer type by Thomas W. McDonald in the shop of John Henry Nash and printed by Lawton R. Kennedy in the shop of Thomas H. Beatty, completed in June, 1931.

An Essay by / HOMER PRICE EARLE / Alonso Quijano & Don Quijote COMMENTS ON THE NOVEL / OF CERVANTES / LOS ANGELES / 1932

Printed by Edd S. Smith and Thomas W. McDonald.

32 pp, wrappers, label, 15.8 x 23.5 cms. Caslon type.

THE / INCOMPARABLE PHYSICIAN

H. L. Mencken / [Chinese characters in orange] / 1936

"Copies of this reprint of an H. L. Mencken burlesque / were made for members of the senior class / of the School of Medicine of the / University of California / San Francisco / Printed by T W McDonald" 24 pp including wrappers, 10.3 x 15.5 cms.

IBID. The eminent physician,

“529 / copies have been printed / with the permission of H L Mencken / by T W McD & Charles Gregory / for Dorothy McDonald, M D / The Gillick Press, Berkeley” (1937?)

12 pp., yellow wrappers printed in Civilité, 6.6 x 11.5 cms.

Through / tunnels and canyons / ROARED A TRAIN / by NAHUM SABSAY

“San Francisco : / 248 copies were printed by T W McDonald / Copyright August 1938 by Nahum Sabsay”

32 pp, blue wrappers, label, 10.1 x 14.5 cms.

PRE-BLACK MACK EPHEMERA

A CURE / for the bite of a / rattlesnake.

1936, 4 pp, folded sheet blue and black ink. “Ist annual GOOD DEED” (xmas)

The Poet’s Vision / Dedicated to Edith Cowan by REC.
no imprint, no date (1936?) 4 pp folder, Arrighi italic

broadside, From “Press Cuttings” by Bernard Shaw

Set by T W McD on the linotype—18 February 1937

EPHEMERA

[Not seen] (1939?)

“Celebrate the renascence of Black Mack [blackletter], a small but mighty ALBION handpress of the last century. BLACK MACK will enter on a life of new impressions on HOT RUM-dampened paper, Saturday, 23rd December, two until midnight [commemorative postage stamp] Sponsors: the McDonalds, 2427 Virginia Street, Berkeley” Quoted in the advertisement to *Asterisk*.

Concerning / BLACK MACK & BLACK MACK / [parenthetical ornaments] / an / Informative Advertisement / of a / Semi-Private Press / Black Mack / North Shore Bay, Lake Mendota / Waunakee, Wisconsin

8 pp pamphlet, sewn, 10.3 x 13.4 cms. Baskerville type.

“Each day the Printer will walk the mile to his mail box. If he finds a letter from you requesting announcements of Black Mack books (though carefully specifying no obligation to buy), he will say, “It is well.” But if there be no mail, yet will he say, “It is well.” Returning along the Six Mile River, he will stroll to the lake which the ancient glaciers created for his spiritual comfort and there plan an advertisement with greater appeal.”

Business card: "Thomas W McDonald, *the Printer* / & / BLACK MACK,
the Handpress / 103 West Mifflin Street Madison, Wisconsin [folded
 to 7.1 x 4 cms]

WHOEVER YOU ARE REQUESTS YOU IF YOU WANT ANYTHING ASK FOR IT IN A FEW WORDS AND THEN DEPART . . .

Broadside "Printed by Black Mack 103 West Mifflin Street Madison"
 circa 1940, approx 27 x 20.6 cms, Garamond type

[In printed envelope:] Greetings [blackletter] / from / Dorothy and Thomas William McDonald / for the / New Year 1941 "The Oath of a Free man"

reprint of the earliest printing in the United States (by Stephen Daye, 1639, no copies extant) 750 impressions, December 1940. Folded half-sheet of Worthy hand-made paper, quarto, 13.4 x 20.5 cms.

Thomas Joseph McDonald / recalls his / Frisco of the Eighties
 Engravings by Frank Utpatel, of Mazomanie
 "Printed on Grey Dot (companion handpress to Black Mack) from original wood-engravings & hand-set type on dampened all-rag paper by Thomas W McDonald" 32 pp, self-wrappers, 12.4 x 16 cms., Baskerville type.

about collecting Bookplates [blackletter] / A LETTER from GILBERT H. DOANE / [typographical flower bookplate] / BLACK MACK, *the Handpress* / 1941

16 pp prospectus and book in slipcase, 360 (more or less) numbered copies. 10.6 x 13.6 cms, printed wrappers, \$3.75, Garamond type, 106 pp.

[nineteen-year hiatus . . .]

*Of the BLACK MACK FOOTNOTES Series: / Asterisk [in blue] / Being the first draft of a footnote / for a projected / History of Juan Pablos / and his printing- / "House of Juan Cromberger" / (New Spain ca. 1539) / Printed at BLACK MACK, *the Handpress* / LOS ANGELES 1960*

30 pp, including uncut folded wrappers, "some one hundred copies."
 11.1 x 15.1 cms., 13 point Bembo and Bembo narrow italic.

FOOTNOTE TO THE HISTORY OF PRINTING IN AMERICA
 [small caps underlined] Obelisk / Containing Perhaps the First Typographic Printing in Any / Language of the Complete Texts of the Juan Pablos and Gil / Barbero Contracts with Juan Cromberger Signed at Seville / June 1539 Providing for the Founding of What May Have / Been the First Printing-Office in the Western Hemisphere / Englished, Printed for Sale, and Copyrighted / by THOMAS W M'DONALD at BLACK

MACK, the Handpress / 1479 Angelus Avenue, Los Angeles 26 / MDCCCCLXJ

40 pp, including folding wrappers, in red dust-jacket, 300 copies. 12.5 x 20.5 cms., Bembo roman and narrow italic types, Highclere paper. Printer's Advertisement mentions forthcoming "DIESIS." — [Typography includes catchwords and small roman caps with italic.]

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

May FOOTNOTES Be Free from Error

16 pp., self-wrappers, 8.5 x 13 cms., Poliphilus, Blado, Bembo roman, and Bembo narrow italic types, dated 25 XII 62

THE / 12 JUNE 1539 / CONTRACTS / [ornaments] / LIBRERIA ANTICURIA / "MEXICO EN LIBROS" / G. M. ECHANIZ / MEXICO / 1964

Copyright 1961 by TWMcD, 2.5 x 3.7 cms, 82 pp, bound in red leather with clasp. "300 Ejemplares Especiales para Dawson's Book Shop de Los Angeles, Cal. (Juan Silva printer)"

Ephemera

31 xii 63 12.7 x 8.3 card announcing move to Palo Alto
 29 vii 64 17.3 x 22.6 sheet printed four up to demonstrate hand-press operation for members of Prof. Herbert Davis' Stanford seminar (three pages from John Johnson's *Typographia*)
 10 iv 65 pw¹ for PW² 10.8 x 16 cms, folded sheet, poem by Richard Armour
 20 i 65 8.3 x 14 new year's greeting card & lamentations
 29 i 66 folded sheet, 11.5 x 16 "Minutes of the Moxon Chappel" Goudy Thirty
 31 xii 66 / to friends of / BLACK MACK, *the Handpress* / Greetings 8 page pamphlet "designed and printed by Katherine, Dolores, and Pamela Quyle at The Pigtail Press (Murphys, California)"
 26 ii 66 Moxon Chappel announcement on newsprint, folded to 8.5 x 12.1, Poliphilus type
 26 iii 66 Announcement of Moxon Chappel meeting at Black Mack on newsprint, folded to 12.5 x 8.4 cms.
 "Addendum to the Minutes of the January MCMLXVJ Meeting of the Moxon Chappel together with a plea for reconciliation and preservation of the Integrity of Big Em" 4 pp., folded to 11.5 x 16.1 cms.
 Announcement of Moxon meeting at Black Mack, 50 copies, n.d., printed at the Pigtail Press, brown paper mounted on pink and black card
 23 vii 66 Minutes of Chappel meeting, card. 10.1 x 15.1 cms., Baskerville.

27 August 66, 15.2 x 10.1 cms, card announcing Moxon meeting at Black Mack

The Wonderful World of
Beatrice Warde, (1967?)

folded card with book-burning poem by BW
Printed with pride by Bill McDonald
at BLACK MACK, the Handpress for
old friends and new admirers of
the incomparable B.W.

Bembo & Fairbank types
John Carroway MEDAL FOR THE AD MAN
Black Mack—Lkw Press
Eagle Rock—Burbank

1975

From a poem presented to TWMcD by BW
Hand set by Black Mack
Design & presswork by Lkw
Design & presswork by Lkw (L. Kenneth Wilson)
Caslon type, 50 copies

ARTICLES BY McDONALD

“Reminiscences of the Grabhorn Press,” Book Club of California *Quarterly News-Letter*, Vol. 14, No. 2, page 27.

“The Echaniz Press: America’s First Printing Press?”, Book Club of California *Quarterly News-Letter*, Vol. 25, No. 1, page 3.

“The Handpress in California: I,” Berkeley, April 1968, *California Librarian*, Vol. 29, No. 2.

“The Handpress in California: II,” Berkeley, January 1969, *California Librarian*, Vol. 30, No. 1.

“Remembering Harry,” a memoir of Ward Ritchie (not seen).

(The compiler’s thanks to Edwin H. Carpenter for assistance with this checklist)

ALASTAIR JOHNSTON is a partner in Poltroon Press of Berkeley, and a lecturer in typography at the University of California, Berkeley.

Elected to Membership

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Membership, \$125 a year, and Sustaining Membership, \$60 a year.

<i>New Sustaining Members</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Dr. Pauline Brown	Palo Alto	Membership Committee
F. Brooke Whiting, II	Los Angeles	R. H. Dillon

The following members have transferred from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

E. Kergan Bruck	Mill Valley
Alan Dietch	Foster City
Judge Sherrill Halbert	Sacramento
Mr. & Mrs. E. F. Hassbaum	Menlo Park
Jamie Person MacLeod	Menlo Park
Malcolm Reynolds	Napa
Priscilla F. Shenk	Oakland
William Robert Stevenson	Santa Monica

The following member has transferred from Regular to Patron Membership:

Lt. Col. Parker M. Holt	Stockton
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The following member has transferred from Sustaining to Patron Membership:

James E. O'Brien	Palo Alto
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The following have been elected to membership since the publication of the Fall News-Letter:

Geoffrey C. Blum	El Cerrito	D. Steven Corey
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Robert Cameron	San Francisco	Joanie Redington
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Edwina Evers	San Francisco	D. Steven Corey
Robert D. Fleck	New Castle,	
	Delaware	Florian Shasky
Myron & Priscilla Graham	Los Osos	Robert E. Blesse
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B O O K S E L L E R

Book Reviews

Printing Heritage. James W. Beaudry, editor. Quarterly from The Friends of the Museum of Printing, Inc., 645 East Washington Street, Hanson, MA 02341. \$10.00.

Printing Heritage (Number 1, September 1981) represents a dream in search of a home. Begun on a shoestring nearly three years ago in Lowell, Massachusetts, and proclaiming as "Incorporators of the Friends of the Museum of Printing, Inc." an impressive roster of supporters, including David Godine, Ben Lieberman, Rollo Silver, and eleven others, *Printing Heritage* is the quarterly voice of a museum that does not yet exist.

The purposes of the publication and the anticipated museum are explained in "The President's Message" by Robert L. Richter: "... to draw together those [who are interested] ... in the collection, preservation, study and use of the tools of printing, ... to excite the interest of newcomers in joining our endeavors," and to establish "... an independent national museum of printing with a lively and productive display of operating equipment, covering the whole span of the history of printing" (p. 3). These goals seem ambitious, to say the least, particularly when one considers the average annual budget of the Friends during the past three years — about \$5,000—most of which went for rent and "riggers' services." Compounding the challenge was the need in September 1981 to move the approximately 130 tons of equipment that was in storage to new quarters, at an estimated cost of between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Although *Printing Heritage* will win no prize for editing and content, the journal was neatly composed and printed at the Groton School Press on a Model 8 Linotype and a Heidelberg cylinder press. Besides an introductory "Welcome" and "The President's Message," the premier issue contains a description and inventory of "The Friends' Collection" of printing equipment, a reprint about "The Great Conflagration at Harper's" in 1853, and the summary minutes of two meetings held in mid-1981.

The idea of a national printing museum is an interesting one, and has been thought of before. The almost insurmountable costs of such a privately funded project, however, assuming no guardian angel is waiting in the wings with checkbook in hand, make this writer wonder whether a more realistic goal might not be local or regional museums of printing equipment of historical significance in those specific areas. Even so, the organizers of this effort should be congratulated on their first publication and their willingness to tackle the near-to-impossible.

BRUCE L. JOHNSON

Winemaking in California. Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun. Foreword by Leon D. Adams. NY: McGraw-Hill, 1982. 250pp. \$24.95.

Of all the books published about California wine, here at last is the first comprehensive history of the state's wine industry, "an account in words and pictures of the Golden State's two-century-long adventure with wine." There are twenty-five chapters, each dealing with an important facet of the development of wine in California, chronologically arranged. The eighteenth chapter, ending on page 175, is entitled "The Pre-Prohibition Years." So the emphasis of the book is clearly on the historical rather than on the contemporary aspects of the wine industry. Another delightful emphasis is pictorial. There are 222 photographs and other illustrations, all in black and white, many of them never before published. The illustrations are placed throughout the text rather than in groups so every page has a lively pictorial sense.

With so many pictures per page and given the vast subject at hand, it is inevitable that depth has been foregone in favor of comprehensiveness. One of my favorite hobbyhorses, H. W. Crabb of the Napa Valley, gets short shrift, but on the other hand he is at least mentioned as is virtually everyone who was anyone. From the early pueblos and ranchos to today's wine explosion each major development in the California wine industry is covered. The authors wisely stayed away from too close an examination of the current scene. To have mentioned even in passing all of the current wineries would have made the book unwieldy and any such information would be out of date almost immediately. After all, the explosion is still going on, and will end who knows when?

The historical development is finely balanced, full of specifics and dates without the excessive impediments of footnotes to make the text fussy. Ruth and Catherine first got interested in the subject when they began interviewing a series of California winemakers for the Regional Oral History Office at The Bancroft Library in the mid-1960's. The years of practice in the lucid exposition of historical material are everywhere evident in the book and make it a joy to read. Meant to be a popular book for the layman it nevertheless impressively handles an enormous amount of information. Even for students of the subject the pages are crowded with factual and pictorial gems. It is difficult to imagine that any finer general historical overview of the California wine industry will ever be done.

D. STEVEN COREY

"*An Old Song*" and "*Edifying Letters of the Rutherford Family.*" Robert Louis Stevenson. Edited and with an Introduction by Roger G. Swearingen. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1982. 102pp. \$17.50.

Those of you who admire Robert Louis Stevenson as well as those who like a good detective story will be glad to learn of the newly discovered long

story by Stevenson, "An Old Song." Although we are glad to have this earliest known published piece firmly identified at last as being by Stevenson, the story itself is not at all a piece of detective fiction. The detective aspect is not fictional but factual and it is rather in the introduction that one discovers that Mr. Swearingen is a first-rate literary sleuth. Only someone with the comprehensive knowledge of Stevenson's manuscripts, which Mr. Swearingen has, could have made the connection between a single miscellaneous page of manuscript at the Beinecke Library at Yale with an early, obscure, and unsigned story by Stevenson which appeared in 1877 in the short-lived English periodical *London*. Thus the detective story that unfolds is a real one, and fascinating.

The Beinecke Library is also the source for the hitherto unpublished manuscript of Stevenson's short story "Edifying Letters of the Rutherford Family" which is strongly autobiographical. Both of these pieces are important additions to the Stevenson canon and Mr. Swearingen deserves our thanks for bringing them both the attention they have long been denied and our admiration for the skill and style with which he accomplished his task.

D. STEVEN COREY

Autos Across America. A Bibliography of Transcontinental Automobile Travel: 1903-1940. Carey S. Bliss. Austin: Jenkins Publishing Co. and New Haven: William Reese Co., 1982. 83pp. \$19.50.

Railroading and maritime history were joined as areas of zealous book collecting by the history of aviation some time ago. But in 1972 Carey Bliss of The Huntington Library stimulated a brand-new field, the history of automobiles, and especially motor touring, with his first bibliography published by Glen Dawson. This new edition covers eighty-eight titles with the inclusion of twenty-two newly-discovered narratives in books, pamphlets and magazine articles. The period covered stops at the arbitrary date of 1940. Actually, nature took its course, and the date is almost as automatic as it is arbitrary. Transcontinental trips were so common by the late 1930's that trip narratives were no longer printed. The last entry in the bibliography is for 1938.

Carey Bliss began to collect in this area for himself about twenty years ago and virtually all of the titles listed can be found in The Huntington Library or the compiler's own collection. In selecting titles to include he used a rather loose definition of "transcontinental" which persists in this new volume. Trips between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Coast qualify and their similarity to the earlier overland narratives from Independence or St. Jo is not accidental, and thus it is not necessary that an automobile drive be made all the way to or from the Atlantic. But trips taken entirely within the West, like Hoffman Birney's *Roads to Roam*, are

relegated to a short-title list of "Rejected Titles," joining accounts of other incomplete trips. Another criterion is that the motorists had to have tackled the West's wild and wooly "roads."

The only real drawback to this fine bibliography is the lack of an index. You cannot spot-check an author without knowing his or her dates, and you have to search all of Bliss's text evaluations and descriptions (which are excellent, by the way) if you are only interested in, say, accounts of Yosemite, Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyon. But that is a minor quibble. Highly recommended.

RICHARD DILLON

Gifts & Acquisitions

Member and former San Francisco printer Linnea Gentry, at her Amaranth Press in Santa Fe, New Mexico, has just produced her first miniature book, and a delightful thing it is. The book, *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allan Poe, is set in six-point Cochin and is printed in five colors with drawings, and excellent they are, by Linnea herself. This tiny book is 2½ by 2 inches and was printed in an edition of 150 copies, 35 of which are deluxe full-leather copies. Our copy, part of the regular edition, is nicely cased in a handmade paste-paper over boards with a mounted label stamped in silver. This charmer was presented to the Club by members Anne and David Bromer who are booksellers and publishers in Boston. The Club is grateful to them for this fine example of Linnea Gentry's printing and illustration.

Our thanks to Club member Arthur L. F. Asking for an unusual example of printing by Lawton Kennedy. This interesting work is titled *Critical Reconstruction vs. Historical Reality of Spanish Poetry in the Golden Age* by Antonio Rodriguez-Monino, with an introduction by Lesley Byrd Simpson. This is one of 500 copies and was printed by Lawton in 1968.

From the Club's helpmate and regular benefactor Barbara Land, we have received two interesting items for our library. The first is a most unusual early item from the Dyke Mill's Montague Press run by Carl Purington Rollins. The title is *A Description of Christ* which was written by Publius Lentulus, the then President of Judea, to Tiberius Caesar in Rome. It was printed at the press in 1912 and is a real charmer. This sensitively printed booklet is not bound and we are having a cover-case made for it. The second is a book printed by the Cambridge University Press in 1921 on *A History of the Cambridge University Press, 1521-1921*. This almost pristine copy, still un-cut, is an important work and is a fine addition to our reference library. Our thanks to dear Barbara for these two handsome gifts.

From member Monsignor Francis J. Weber of Los Angeles we have received another of his charming miniature books, this one about Hollywood —well, not quite. It is the story of “the world’s biggest sign, four stories high and one-half football field in length,” telling of its construction in 1923 and its re-construction in 1978. This miniature was produced by the Junipero Serra Press in San Fernando and was designed by Francis Braun. The book is cased in red leather stamped in gold with all edges in gold. Our warm thanks to Monsignor Weber.

Member Harold Berliner has sent us a copy of the latest effort of his type-foundry, *Garden of Printer’s Flowers*, which is a catalogue of his hot-metal fleurons, flowers, and type borders. This is a well printed and well organized catalogue, full of fascinating items. Copies may be had by writing Harold Berliner Typefounder, 224 Main St., Nevada City, CA 95959.

Due to lack of space in our last *Quarterly News-Letter*, we were unable to acknowledge our usual quarterly gifts from Toni Savage whose continued gifts have gone on for several years. Our apologies, but it could not be helped. Since then we have received another group so now we have two groups of his exciting private press publications for which to thank him. The first group included more of his incomparable broadsheets up to number 218! With these and other delightful ephemera pieces Mr. Savage included his latest booklet, *Schondilie*, translated from the German by Charles Causley and illustrated with wonderful line engravings by Robert Tilling. Our copy is number 38 of 55 copies printed on Sheepstor handmade paper and is signed by the translator, artist, and Toni Savage. The “just received” group of keepsakes included three booklets. The first is *Lap Larch Poems* by Rex Brisland, illustrated with “Irish drawings” by Rigby Graham of which our copy is number 48 of 100 and is signed by the author. The second is *Today I Waited*, four poems by Victor Fenech with drawings by Kathie Layfield of which our copy is number 41 of an edition of 110. The third booklet is *Four Poems* by Michael Hanke with a drawing by Rigby Graham, this being copy number 87 of an edition of 120. No printer, private or otherwise, has been more generous in sharing his work with the Club. Some while back we commented that we believe we own the most comprehensive collection of Toni Savage’s work in the United States, for which we are most grateful.

From member Ray Brian we have received a large collection of fine press ephemera, many of which we did not have even though we have a good collection of ephemera. Mr. Brian allowed that we may select any of the items we wanted for the collection and that the rest could be included in our next auction. This is a most thoughtful gift and our thanks to Mr. Brian.

A recent addition to the Club's collection of oral histories produced by The Bancroft Library Regional Oral History Office is *Albert Shumate; San Francisco Physician, Historian, and Catholic Layman . . .*, an interview conducted by Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun in 1978, with an introduction by former Club president Warren Howell.

Our thanks to member Msgr. Francis J. Weber for presenting the Club with another in his series of books on the California missions, *Mission of the Passes*, in which the history of Santa Ines Mission is related through "period documents" arranged chronologically and identified by brief introductions, thus allowing each "individual entry to speak for itself" in the language of the original commentator. We are also grateful to Msgr. Weber for his gift to the Club of his *California: The Catholic Experience*, an important contribution to the history of the Catholic Church in our state.

Publication Note

The Club's Winter 1982 book is a landmark publication in California art history, containing the earliest known complete set of California mission views, reproduced for the first time from the original watercolors in The Bancroft Library collection. *Edward Vischer's Drawings of the California Missions, 1861-1878* includes forty-four full-color reproductions of the Bavarian-born artist's sensitive interpretations of the missions as he saw them in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The text, which illuminates both the man and his work, is by Jeanne Van Nostrand, whose *San Francisco, 1860-1906, In Contemporary Paintings, Drawings and Watercolors* was published by the Club in 1975. San Francisco art critic Thomas Albright has provided a lively introduction and the plate captions are excerpts from the artist's own writings. Designed and printed by Andrew Hoyem at his Arion Press, the oblong folio volume has been produced in an edition of six hundred copies. The price is \$150.00.

Serendipity

Members who like modern fine printing will want to know about a new book to be published in 1983 by member W. Thomas Taylor, the well-known Austin bookseller. The book is *Printer's Choice, a Selection of American Press Books, 1968-1978*. It is a catalogue of the landmark exhibition held at the Grolier Club in New York from December 19, 1978 until February 3, 1979. Ruth E. Fine and William Matheson were responsible for the selection of the books and the press histories and there are additional bibliographical descriptions and notes by W. Thomas Taylor.

The book will cover one hundred books printed by forty-one American presses. The printer will be David Holman of Austin. There will be a section of photographs of the printers and tipped-in specimen sheets specially commissioned by the publisher from eight of the presses including the Allen Press, Ward Ritchie's Laguna Verde Imprenta, and the Plantin Press. The book will be limited to 325 copies and will sell for \$395.00. A handsome prospectus is available from Mr. Taylor at Box 5343, Austin, Texas 78763.

With Christmas on its way, members may wish to note that a few copies of the following publications are still available (we suggest that you telephone your orders to the Club early if you wish to receive copies for Christmas giving):

The Gold Digger's Song Book. Cranium Press, 1975. \$27.50
A Western Journey With Mr. Emerson. Richard Hoffman, 1980. \$20.00
Dan De Quille of the Big Bonanza. Tamal Land Press, 1980. \$35.00
BR. Richard Hoffman, 1981. \$20.00
A Trumpet of Our Own. Black Stone Press, 1981. \$42.50
Paul Landacre. Castle Press, 1982. \$22.50
Vignettes of Early California. Patrick Reagh, 1982. \$35.00.

Members who wish to mail in their orders, please note: California residents, add 6% tax; residents of Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties, and of Santa Clara County and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit Districts, add 6½% tax.

With deep regret we mourn the death of Valenti Angelo, aged eighty-five, on September 3, 1982, in San Francisco. Valenti had been a friend of the Club since 1926 when he began his long and illustrious career as artist, author, and printer. The Club expresses its sympathy to the family and wishes to announce that a memorial keepsake will be forthcoming.

JAMES LINDEN

It is with deep regret that we record the death of member Dr. Henry Miller Madden of Fresno on August 27, age seventy. A native of Oakland and a Stanford graduate, Dr. Madden was Head Librarian of Fresno State University from 1949 to 1979. His *German Travelers in California* was published by the Club in 1958 and he was the author of two other books.

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